

REMARKS ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated October 23, 2003. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8-12, 16, 18 and 20-23 are pending. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8-12, 16, 18 and 20-23 are rejected. Claim 18 is objected to. Claims 1, 3, and 18 have been amended. Claims 22 and 23 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8-12, 16, 18, and 20-21 remain pending in the present application.

Claim 18 is objected to because of informalities. Accordingly, Applicant has amended claim 18 to remove reference to claim 17. The examiner's objection is thus traversed.

Claims 1, 3, 6, 9-11, 18, 21-23 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Armstrong (5,311,585) in view of George (4,644,532) and Alexander (5,986,782). Claims 22 and 23 have been canceled, thus, their rejections are moot.

Applicant respectfully disagrees as to the claims as amended. Applicant submits that George does not teach the session identifier in accordance with the present invention. In George, whenever a node senses a change in an adjacent link or when an ordinary node gets a new owner, the node reports the status of all its adjacent links, the message including a sequence number or time stamp from the transmitting node. Whenever a control node receives such a message, the control node compares the sequence number or the time stamp with link status table information previously received from the node in the topology data base. If the message's sequence number is not newer, then the message is ignored. Otherwise, the topology data base is modified with a new line data of status table from the sending node. This information is then transmitted to adjacent domains. (Col. 13, lines 20-31)

However, in contrast to the present invention, George does not teach or suggest that each node in the network associates the same the sequence number or time stamp with a particular

topology. The topology discovery mechanism in accordance with the present invention utilizes a session identifier that devices in the network place on all neighbor status messages sent on the network. All devices store the current session number and update it based on session numbers used in messages received from the network. (Specification p. 7, line 22 – p. 8, line 8) Thus, with the present invention, the same session identifier associated with a particular topology is used throughout the interconnected nodes in the network. George does not teach or suggest such a session identifier. Instead, the sequence number or time stamp in George is taught to be used in the message between the node that senses a change and the node receiving the message. George does not teach that the same sequence number or time stamp is also sent by the receiving node when it transmits the topology data to the adjacent domains.

Therefore, Armstrong in view of George and Alexander do not teach or suggest a plurality of routing switches, wherein each of the routing switches associates the same incremented session identifier to the changed topology, as recited in amended independent claims 1 and 3.

Claims 4, 8, 16, and 20 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Armstrong, George and Alexander, as applied to claims 1 and 3 above, and further in view of Pitchaikani (6,061,505). Claim 12 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Armstrong, George and Alexander as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Liang (5,732,086).

Applicant submits that claims 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20 are patentable when read in combination with their respective amended independent claims 1 and 3. Applicant's argument above concerning Armstrong, George and Alexander as applied to claims 1 and 3 apply here with equal force. Thus, even if Pitchaikani or Liang teaches the limitations as argued by the examiner, Armstrong, George and Alexander in combination with Pitchaikani or Liang still do not teach or suggest a plurality of routing switches, wherein each of the routing switches associates the same

incremented session identifier to the changed topology, as recited in the combination of claims 4, 8, 12, 16, and 20 and their respective amended independent claims 1 and 3.

Therefore, for the above identified reasons, the present invention as recited in independent claims 1 and 3 is neither taught nor suggested by the cited references. Applicant further submits that claims 4, 6, 8-12, 16, 18, and 20-21 are also allowable because they depend on the above allowable base claims.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8-12, 16, 18, and 20-21 are patentable over the cited references. Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the claims as now presented.

Applicants' attorney believes this application in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,
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